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## 3. THE SACRIFICES.

Animal victims	9:13	Christ offered himself	9:14
Repeatedly offered	9:23-25; 10:11	Once at the end of ages	9:26 ff
Manifestly inadequate	(10:4)	A perfect atonement	10:5-10
a. Sanctifies, externally	9:13	Purifies and energizes internally	9:14
b. Imperfect access to God	10:1	Idealizes worship	10:19-21
c. Recollection of sins	9:9; 10:2-4, 11	Joyous sense of pardon	10:11-13
		Completes our sanctification	10:14
Solemn expostulation based on Christ's priestly work			10:21-39

## THE FATHERS.

Their manifold trials	chap. 11	Christ endured the cross	12:2
They all overcame by faith		Showed faith in ideal perfection	
Have entered on reward		Sat down at the right hand of God	
Encouragements in trial based on above			12:3-17

## THE GIVING OF THE LAW.

Mount Sinai terror-inspiring	12:18-21	Mount Zion, center of grace	12:22-24
Warnings based on the grace of the new covenant			12:25-29
Moral duties			13:1-8
Caused to sever connection with Judaism			13:9-14
Further duties and conclusions			13:16-25

## THE EPISTLES OF JOHN.

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*Authorship. — To whom written. — Occasion of writing. — Analysis of 1 John. — The two shorter Epistles.*

THE writer of the letter, commonly called First John, describes himself as having been a personal follower of Jesus (1:1-4), but does not give his name. The similarity in style, vocabulary and doctrine to the fourth gospel is, however, so clearly marked that there can be no reasonable doubt that the letter and the gospel are from the same pen. This resemblance extends to favorite words such as *light, darkness, life, truth, world*, and *word* (as applied to Christ); to phrases, such as *children of God, children of the devil, a new commandment, to keep his commandments, to be of the truth, to do the truth, to pass from death to life, begotten (or born) of God, only begotten Son, Saviour of the world*; and to thoughts expressed in similar or slightly different words, such as, for example, *the world's hatred of Christians, God's love of the world prompt-*

*ing him to send his Son, the witness that God bears to his Son, the fact that no man has seen God.*

The letter is without address or salutation, and though the writer frequently addresses his readers, he uses no language by which they can be definitely located. They are evidently Christians (see esp. 5:13), and in all probability Gentile Christians; there are at least no distinctively Jewish forms of expression, no quotations from the Old Testament, and the distinction between Jewish and Gentile Christians is lost sight of in that between Christians and the world. If in accordance with constant tradition we ascribe the letter to the apostle John, and bear in mind the evidence of his residence in Ephesus, we shall most naturally find those to whom the letter was written among the Gentile Christians in the vicinity of that city; and the letter itself becomes in that case interesting testimony to the condition of affairs in that region in the latter part of the first century.

What the situation was to which the letter addressed itself is in any case quite clear. It was no longer possible to accept the teaching of every man who claimed to speak by the spirit of God, because many false prophets were abroad (4:1). Certain men were denying that Jesus was the Christ, refusing to confess Jesus as Christ come in the flesh (2:18, 23; 4:3), thus seeking to lead the disciples away from that which they had heard from the beginning (2:24-26). This heretical teaching was apparently some form of docetism, akin to the view that Jesus was not himself the Christ, but that the Christ came to him at his baptism and left him before he suffered (*cf.* 5:1, 5, 6). Thus Irenæus (*Against Heresies* 1.26.1) says of Cerinthus, traditionally described as an opponent of John, that he held that Jesus was not born of a virgin, but was the son of Joseph and Mary. . . . After his baptism Christ descended upon him in the form of a dove, but at last Christ departed from Jesus, and Jesus suffered and rose again, while Christ remained impassible, inasmuch as he was a spiritual being. The recently discovered apocryphal gospel of Peter is generally thought to represent the same opinion, when it says of Jesus on the cross that "he was silent, as if in no wise feeling pain," and reports his words on the cross in the form, "My power, my power, hast thou forsaken me?" But the false teaching to whose evil influence the readers of this epistle were subject was not wholly Christological. There were those too the intent or tendency of whose teaching was to make sin a slight thing not inconsistent with Christian character. In particular was a harsh or unloving spirit toward the brethren indulged or encouraged (3:6-18).

The letter combats these tendencies to false doctrine and immoral life, both by reproving them directly and by insisting upon the recognition of Jesus as the Messiah come in the flesh and upon the duty of Christians to love one another as God loves them, and of keeping themselves from sin. The tendency of the letter is to draw the line very sharply between the world and the children of God, and its purpose is to keep its readers steadfast in doctrine and life, unspotted and separate from the world (1:3-4; 2:1, 26; 5:13).

As respects the plan of the letter, its thought moves in circles rather than in straight lines. The writer emphasizes his chief thoughts, not by extended and separate discussion but by repeated reference. The following is an attempt to show the order of thought:

#### ANALYSIS OF I JOHN.

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|---|----------|
| 1. Introduction: The writer's message and his purpose in writing.   | 1:1-4    |
| 2. The duty of Christians to keep themselves from sin, separate from the world, walking in light.         | 1:5-2:17 |
| 3. Warning against the antichrists who deny that Jesus is the Christ.                                     | 2:18-29  |
| 4. The high destiny of the children of God and their duty to keep themselves pure from sin.               | 3:1-12   |
| 5. Christians will be hated by the world, but must love one another in truth.                             | 3:13-24  |
| 6. Warning against false prophets and their false teaching about Jesus.                                   | 4:1-6    |
| 7. Exhortation to mutual love, because of God's love toward us.   | 4:7-21   |
| 8. The relation of faith, as acceptance of God's testimony concerning his Son, to love, and to assurance. | 5:1-13   |
| 9. The duty of Christians to pray for one another.  | 5:14-17  |
| 10. Conclusion: the Christian's certainties.  | 5:18-21  |

The two short letters known as the second and third epistles of John bear no author's name, but the writer designates himself as "the elder." It was doubted even in early times whether they came from the apostle John. But their close resemblance to the first epistle is a strong argument, against which there seems no sufficient counter evidence, for regarding them as proceeding from the same source as that from which the gospel and the first epistle came.

Both letters seem at first sight to be private letters. It has been much disputed, however, whether "the elect lady" to whom the second

is addressed is really a Christian woman or a Christian church. The latter view seems rather more probable (notice the plural pronouns in verses 8 and 10). Not improbably it is written to the church mentioned in v. 9 of the third letter. The children of the elect lady, *i. e.*, on this view the members of the church, are spoken of approvingly, but the presence of many deceivers is mentioned, and the readers of the letter are bidden not to receive any who come to them bringing other than the true teaching. The situation is thus similar to that which the first epistle shows, and the two letters may well belong to nearly the same time.

The third letter is addressed to Gaius, the beloved, to whom the writer pays the high compliment of praying that he may prosper and be in health as his soul prospers. It commends to him the traveling missionaries of the gospel, bidding him set them forward on their journey worthily of God. Who Gaius was is unknown. Diotrephes, a disturber of the church, is strongly condemned. As in the second letter, so in this also the writer announces his intention of coming soon to see his correspondent.

It is impossible to locate these two letters exactly as to time, place, or persons addressed. It is probable that they were written not far from the same time as the first letter, and the three together give us not improbably our latest view of the apostolic age.